

MBTA COMMUNITIES

ZONING FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN ARLINGTON

3/9/23

Community Visioning Session

Town of Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development

MBTA Communities Working Group



TONIGHT'S MEETING

Why have a visioning session? What are we doing with this information?

MEETING PROTOCOL



Comments and questions are welcome in the chat, although we may not be able to respond during the presentation. Please be kind to us and others.



We don't have all the answers, and we shouldn't at this point. Tonight is for us to learn about your vision for multifamily housing in Arlington. No one is right or wrong.

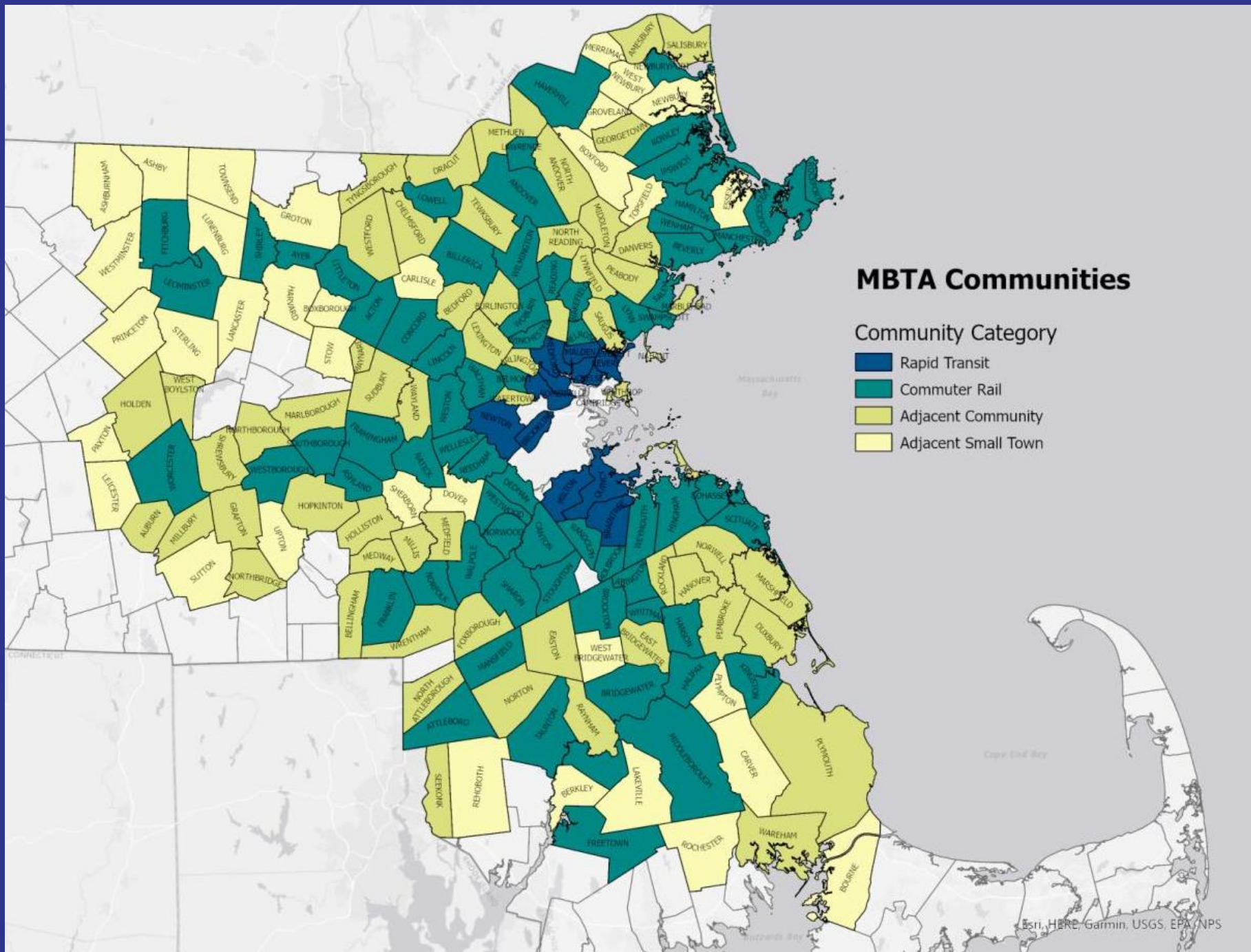


Let's be curious. Help us try to find ideas and answers. What benefits can we achieve through compliance? What community values can be uplifted?

2

LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

A refresher on our Section 3A assignment



MGL C.40A SECTION 3A

At least one district
of reasonable size

Multifamily housing permitted
as of right

No age restrictions; suitable for
families with children

Minimum gross density of 15
units/acre

Not more than ½ miles from a
subway station or bus station,
if applicable



GUIDELINES FOR ARLINGTON

Minimum 32 acres

Building with 3+ residential
dwelling units

No age restrictions or bedroom
limits in zoning

Capacity for 2,046 units

District(s) must be at least 5
contiguous acres; location
unrestricted, but recommended
location along transit corridors and
commercial centers



(a)(1) An MBTA community shall have a zoning ordinance or by at least 1 district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right; provided, however, that such multi-family housing shall be without age restrictions and shall be suitable for families with children. For the purposes of this section, a district of reasonable size shall: (i) have a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre, *subject to any further limitations* of section 40 of chapter 131 and title 5 of the state environmental code established pursuant to section 13 of chapter 21A; and (ii) be located not more than 0.5 miles from a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal or bus station, if applicable.

(b) An MBTA community that fails to comply with this section shall not be eligible for funds from (i) the Housing Choice Initiative as described by the governor in a message to the general court dated December 11, 2017; (ii) the Local Capital Projects Fund established in section 2EEEE of chapter 29; or (iii) the MassWorks infrastructure program established in section 63 of chapter 23A.

(c) The department, in consultation with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, shall promulgate guidelines to determine if an MBTA community is in compliance with this section.

ARLINGTON + DHCD GUIDELINES



Community
categories



Capacity



“Reasonable
size” criteria



District
location



Incentives*

*Not entirely a component
of DHCD guidelines

ARLINGTON + DHCD GUIDELINES

1

Community
categories

2

Capacity

3

“Reasonable
size” criteria

4

District
location

5

Incentives*



Arlington is now
an “**adjacent**”
community

ARLINGTON + DHCD GUIDELINES

1

Community
categories



Arlington is now
an **“adjacent”**
community

2

Capacity



10% of total
housing units, or
2,046 units

3

“Reasonable
size” criteria

4

District
location

5

Incentives*

CORE CONCEPT: “CAPACITY”

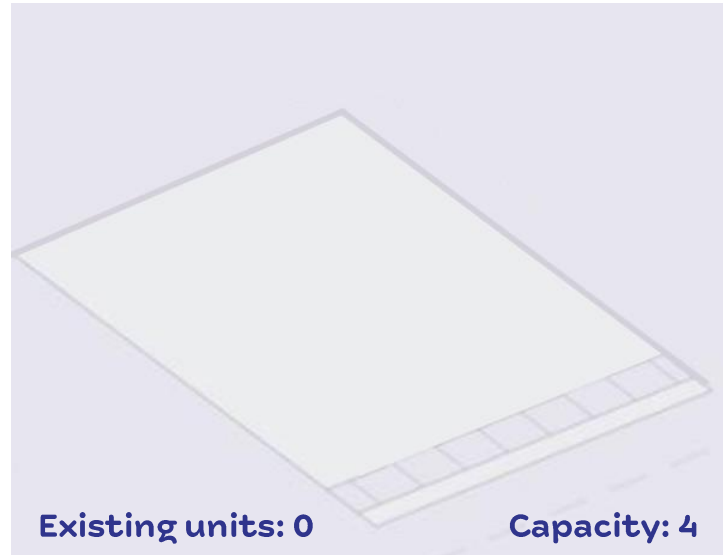
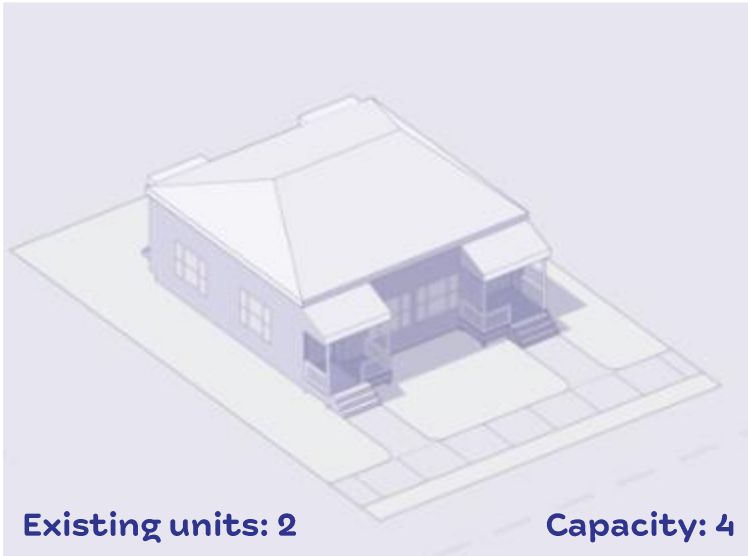
Existing use: duplex



Treat or count as an undeveloped parcel



Evaluate for what could be built by right under zoning: fourplex



IMPORTANT! To determine the unit capacity of a new or existing multi-family zoning district, you do not “count” existing units—you instead determine how many multi-family units the zoning district would allow by right on that parcel if it were undeveloped.

ARLINGTON + DHCD GUIDELINES

1

Community
categories



Arlington is now
an **“adjacent”**
community

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Capacity



10% of total
housing units, or
2,046 units

3

“Reasonable
size” criteria



Reduced to **32
acres**

4

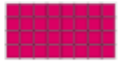
District
location

5

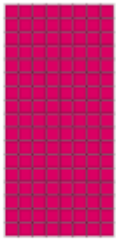
Incentives*

CORE CONCEPT: “REASONABLE SIZE”

Arlington's
minimum district
sizes (to scale; 1 box
= 1 acre)



32 acres



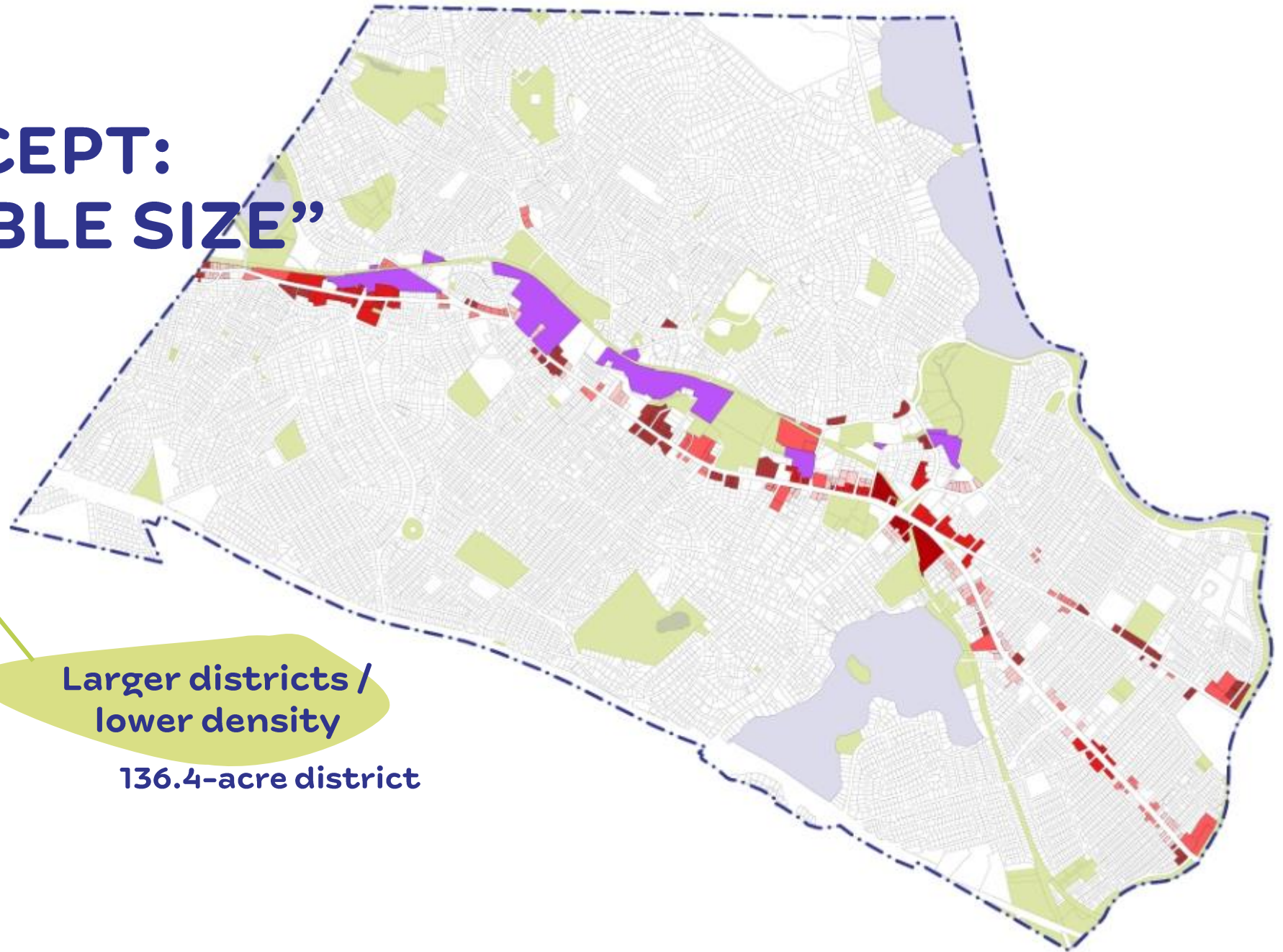
136 acres

Smaller districts /
higher density

63.9 dwelling units/acre

Larger districts /
lower density

136.4-acre district



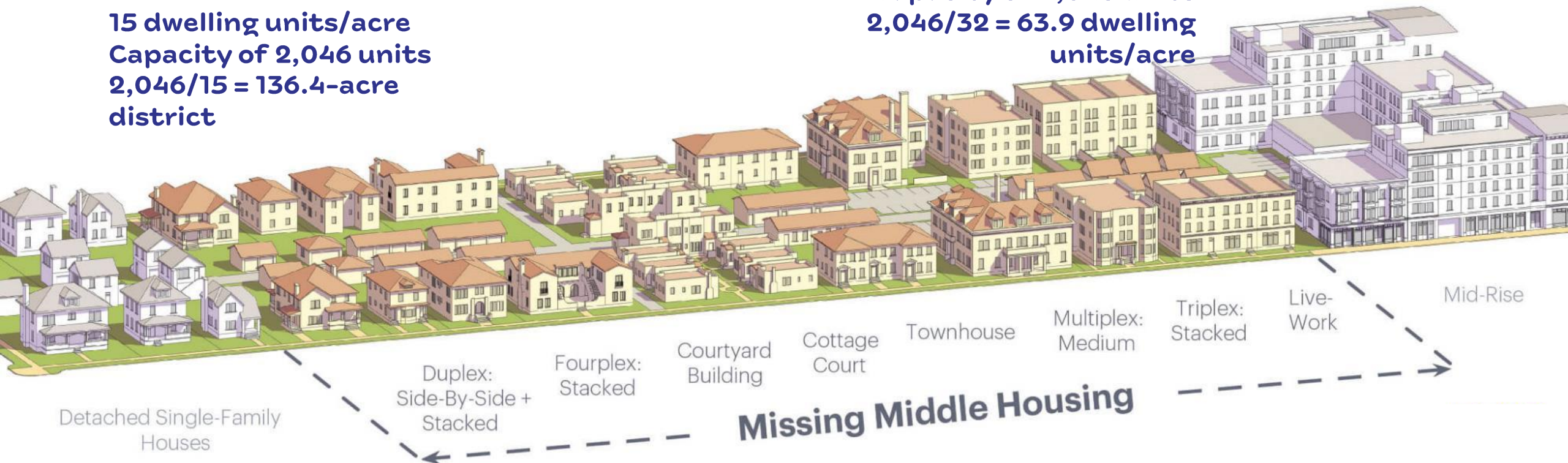
CORE CONCEPT: VISUALIZING DENSITY

Larger districts /
lower density

15 dwelling units/acre
Capacity of 2,046 units
 $2,046/15 = 136.4$ -acre
district

Smaller districts /
higher density

32-acre district
Capacity of 2,046 units
 $2,046/32 = 63.9$ dwelling
units/acre



CORE CONCEPT: VISUALIZING DENSITY

Triple Decker
3 units
Gross density: 11-30 du/acre



Fourplex: Stacked
4 units
Gross density: 14-22 du/acre



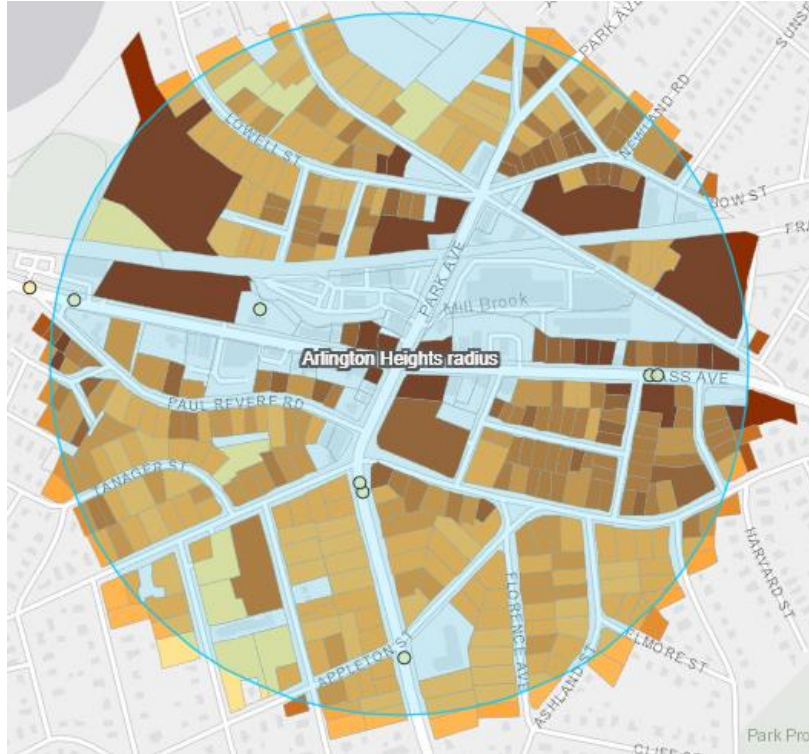
Multiplex building
5-16 units
Gross density: 10-50 du/acre



Courtyard building
6-25 units
Gross density: 21-56 du/acre



YOUR DENSITY AND YOU



Arlington Heights

10.34 DU/acre



Arlington Center

11.48 DU/acre



Capitol Square

14.37 DU/acre

ARLINGTON + DHCD GUIDELINES

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District
location



**Arlington gets to
choose location**
(0% required to be within ½
mile of Alewife)

5

Incentives*

ARLINGTON + DHCD GUIDELINES



CORE CONCEPT: INCENTIVES

By complying with MBTA Communities legislation, Arlington would remain eligible for funding from...



MassWorks Infrastructure Program



Housing Choice Initiative



Local Capital Projects Fund

... and, if is zoning adopted next fall, can participate in




MA Clean Energy Law Pilot Program

WHY COMPLIANCE MATTERS

By allowing multifamily housing near transit or services, we can accomplish goals laid out in several recent plans*.

The result is:

-  Participation in State's fossil fuel free demonstration pilot (approved by 92% of Town Meeting Members)
-  Better access to work, services, and other destinations by increasing mobility and utilization of public transit
-  More housing closer to the places that we go every day, such as local shops, jobs, schools, restaurants, parks, etc.
-  Increased demand for locally-serving retail and transit services in walkable neighborhoods
-  Reducing reliance on single occupancy vehicles, which helps our larger effort to confront the climate crisis
-  Housing choice for empty nesters who want to downsize, adult children who want to live in town, first-time homeowners, etc.

* Master Plan, Housing Production Plan, Net Zero Action Plan, Connect Arlington, Fair Housing Action Plan, Affordable Housing Trust Action Plan



3

VISIONING SESSION

Kicking off Phase II of this process

COMMUNITY VISION AND PRIORITIES

Neighborhood Amenities

- Public transportation routes
- Walkable and bikeable areas
- Creating new affordable housing
- Encouraging mixed use
- Incorporating sustainable principles
- Proximity to shared community spaces

Proximity/location

- Multi-family housing on commercial corridors
- Multifamily housing in commercial centers
- Multifamily housing near commercial corridors
- Avoiding flood prone areas
- On large parcels
- In all neighborhoods of Arlington

INFRASTRUCTURE + AMENITIES

Public transportation routes

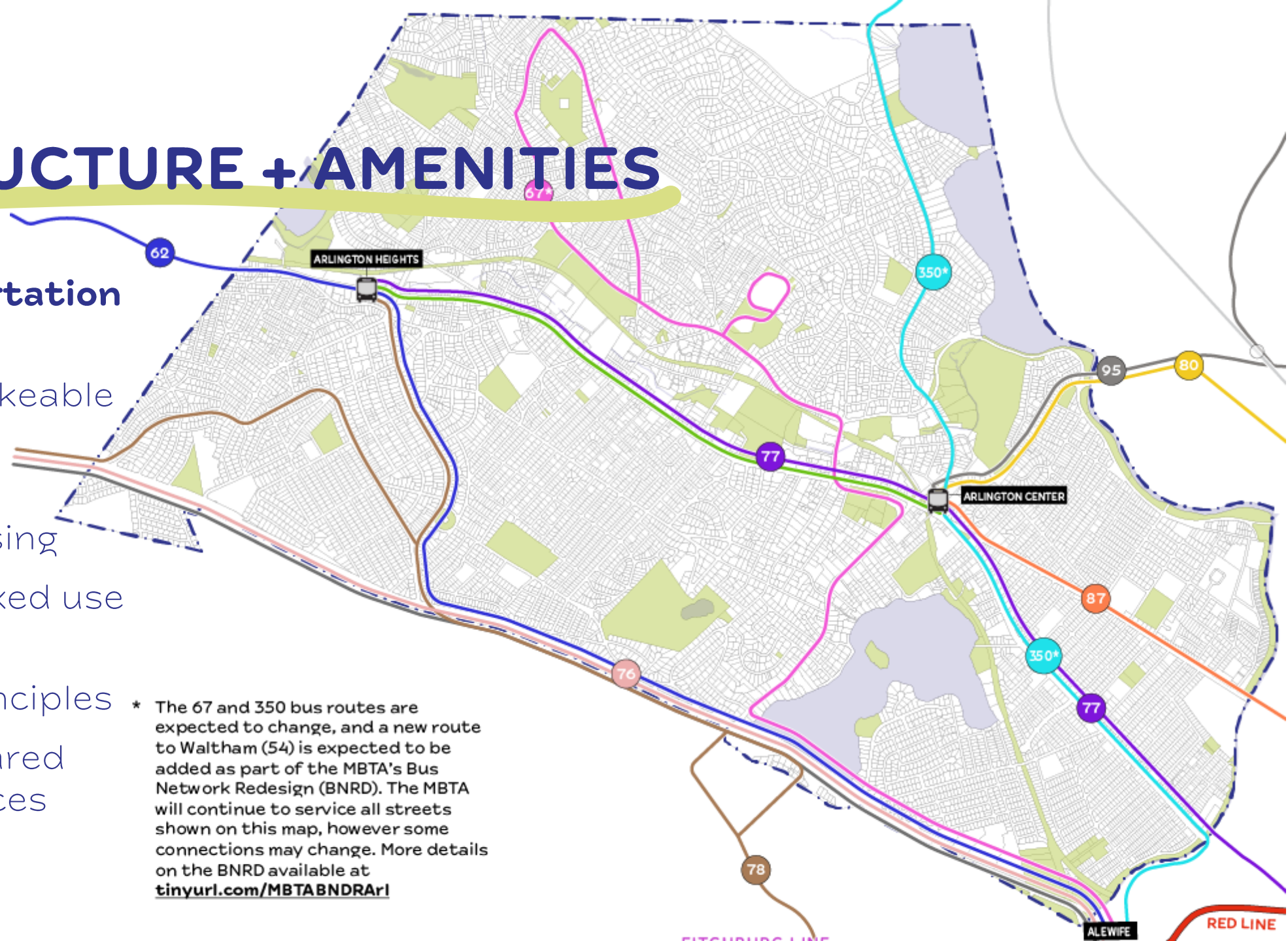
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INFRASTRUCTURE + AMENITIES

Public transportation
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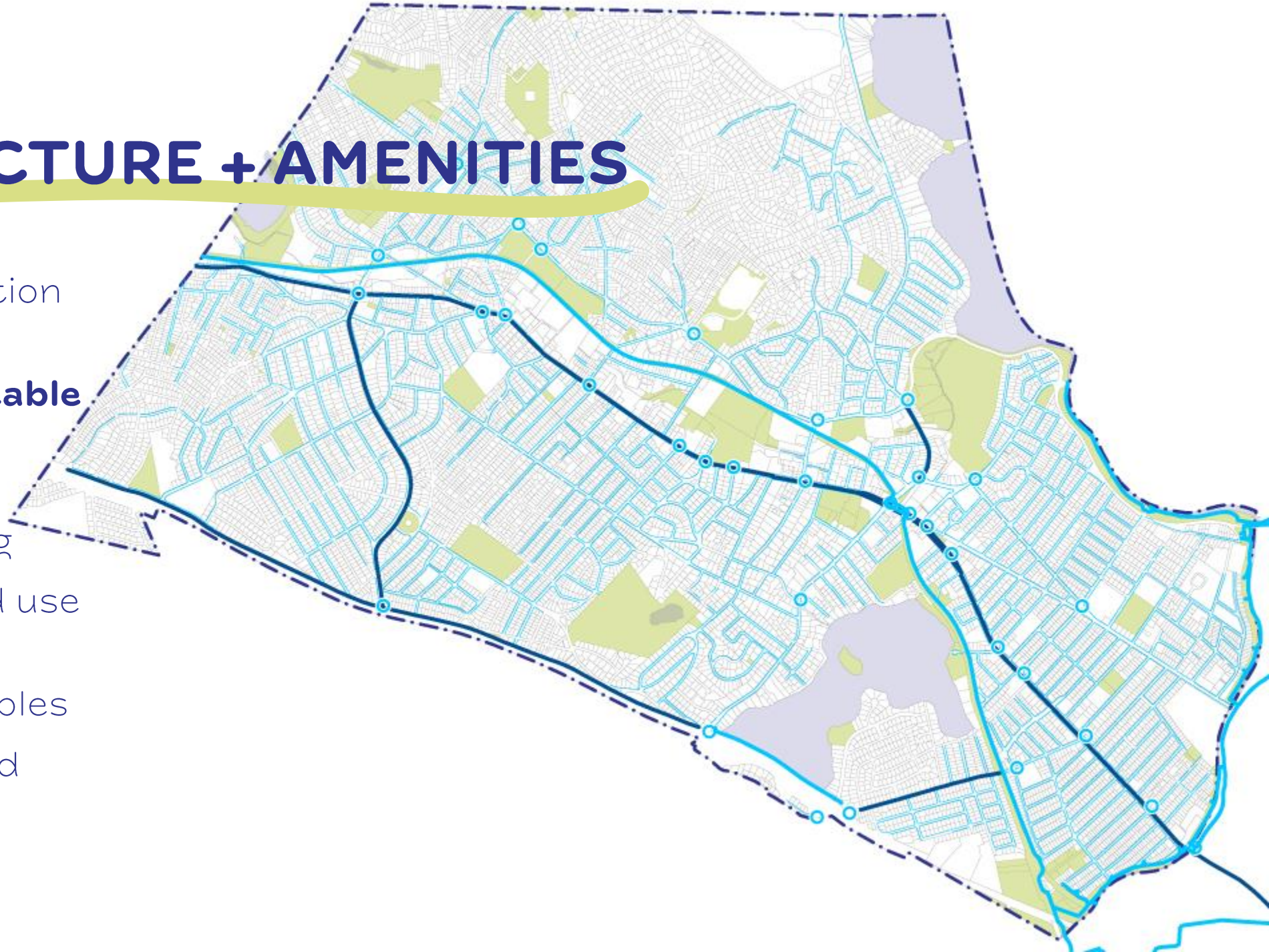
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INFRASTRUCTURE + AMENITIES

Public transportation routes

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Family size: 4	Extremely Low ~30% AMI (less than \$42,050/yr)		Very Low 50% AMI (less than \$70,100/yr)		Low 80% AMI (less than \$111,850/yr)		Moderate 100% AMI (less than \$140,200/yr)	Middle 120% AMI (less than \$168,250/yr)
	Affordable 3BR rents	\$734	\$1,303	\$2,154	\$2,721	\$3,290		
	Affordable 3BR sales	n/a	\$160,900	\$290,300	\$368,500	\$445,300		
Family size: 2	Extremely Low ~30% AMI (less than \$33,650/yr)		Very Low 50% AMI (less than \$56,100/yr)		Low 80% AMI (less than \$89,500/yr)		Moderate 100% AMI (less than \$112,200/yr)	Middle 120% AMI (less than \$134,640/yr)
	Affordable 2BR rents	\$659	\$1,164	\$1,921	\$2,426	\$2,931		
	Affordable 2BR sales	n/a	\$137,000	\$252,000	\$326,000	\$394,100		
Family size: 1	Extremely Low ~30% AMI (less than \$29,450/yr)		Very Low 50% AMI (less than \$49,100/yr)		Low 80% AMI (less than \$78,300/yr)		Moderate 100% AMI (less than \$98,200/yr)	Middle 120% AMI (less than \$117,840/yr)
	Affordable 1BR rents	\$590	\$1,031	\$1,695	\$2,136	\$2,577		
	Affordable 1BR sales	n/a	\$113,100	\$213,700	\$280,700	\$343,000		

Sources:

Extremely Low, Very Low, and Low income limits: HUD FY2022 Income Limits Summary (<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>)
Moderate income limit obtained by multiplying 50% AMI by two; Middle income limit obtained by multiplying Moderate income limit by 1.2.
Price limits: BPDA Income, Asset, and Price Limits (2022): <http://www.bostonplans.org/housing/income-asset-and-price-limits>

INFRASTRUCTURE + AMENITIES

Public transportation routes

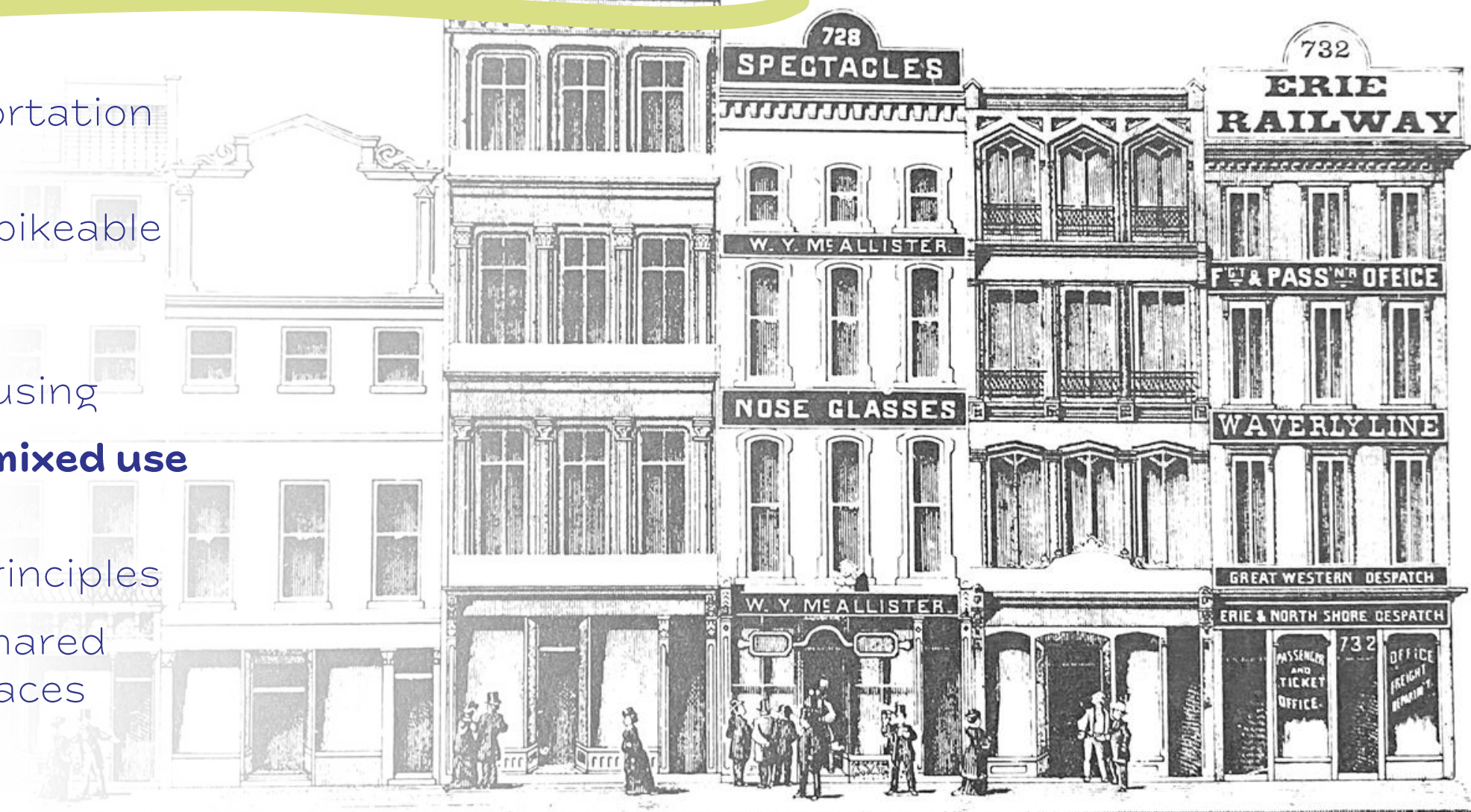
Walkable and bikeable areas

Creating new affordable housing

Encouraging mixed use

Incorporating sustainable principles

Proximity to shared community spaces





The image is a detailed architectural line drawing of a row of five multi-story buildings. The ground floor is designated for commercial use, with various storefronts and signage. The upper floors are residential, featuring numerous windows of different shapes and sizes, some with decorative lintels and sills. The buildings vary in height and style, with some having flat roofs and others with more ornate, gabled or mansard-style roofs. The drawing is in a classic architectural style, using fine lines and cross-hatching for shading.

RESIDENTIAL (HOUSING) ABOVE

COMMERCIAL ON GROUND FLOOR



INFRASTRUCTURE + AMENITIES

Public transportation routes

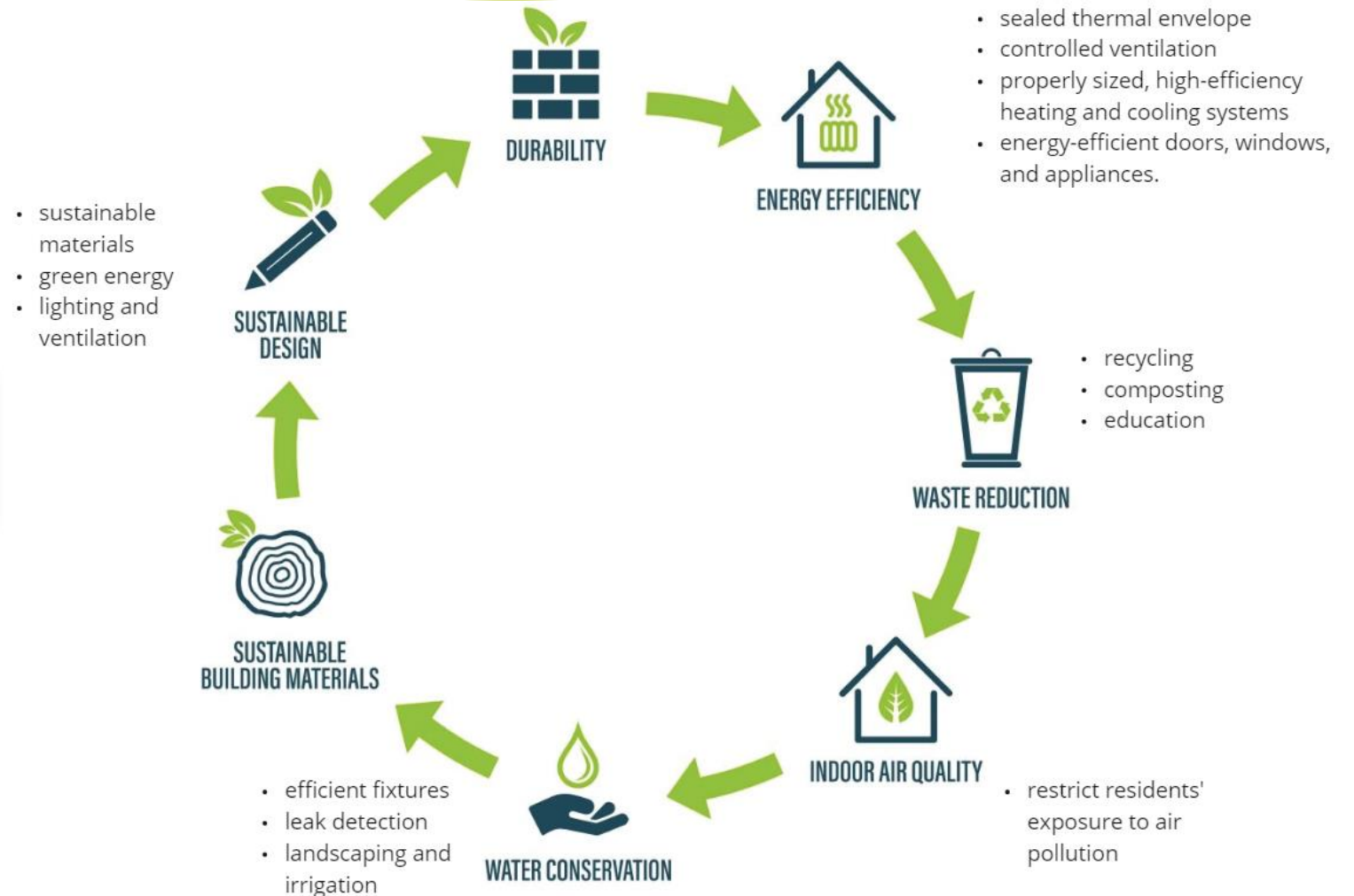
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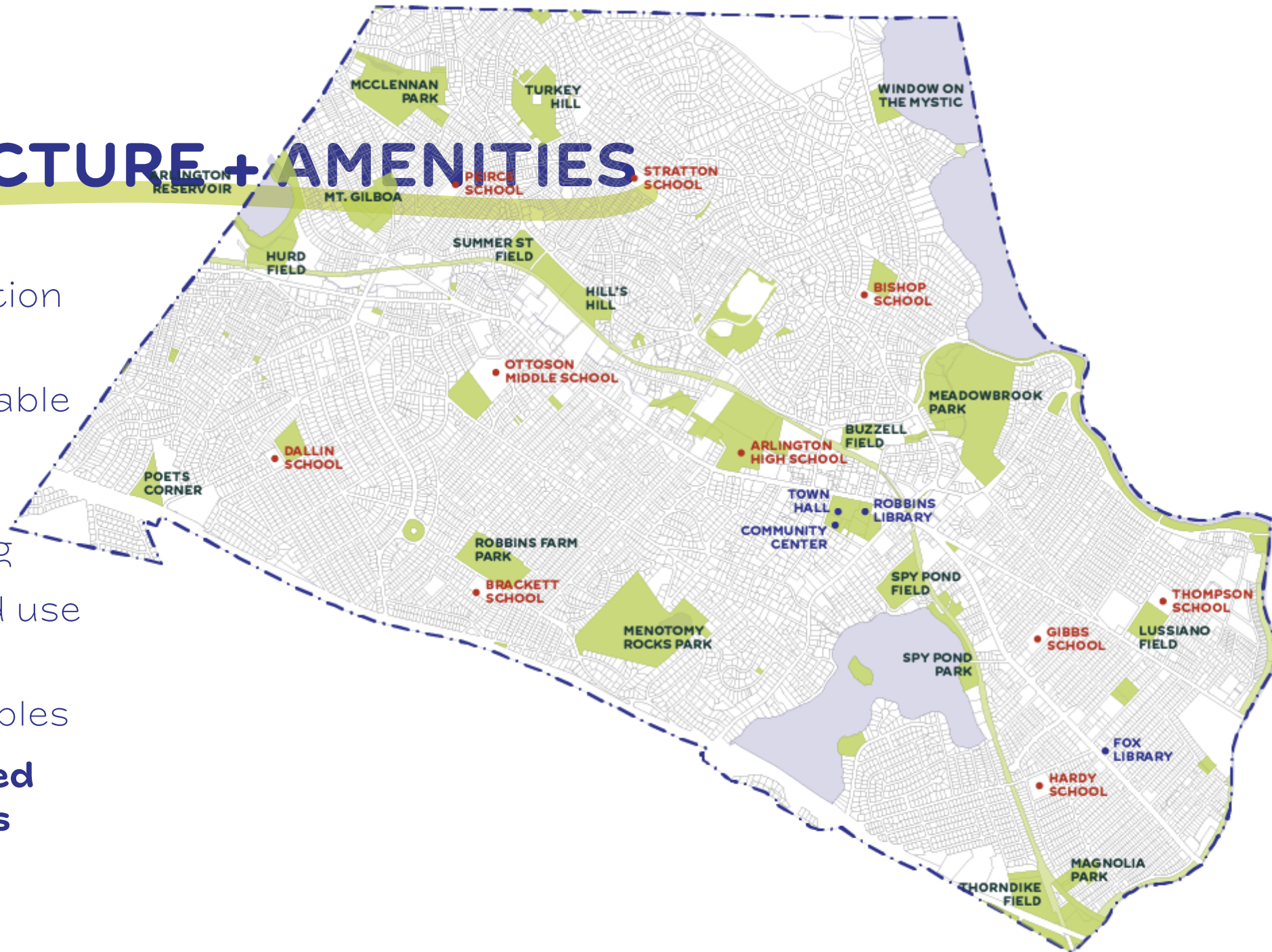
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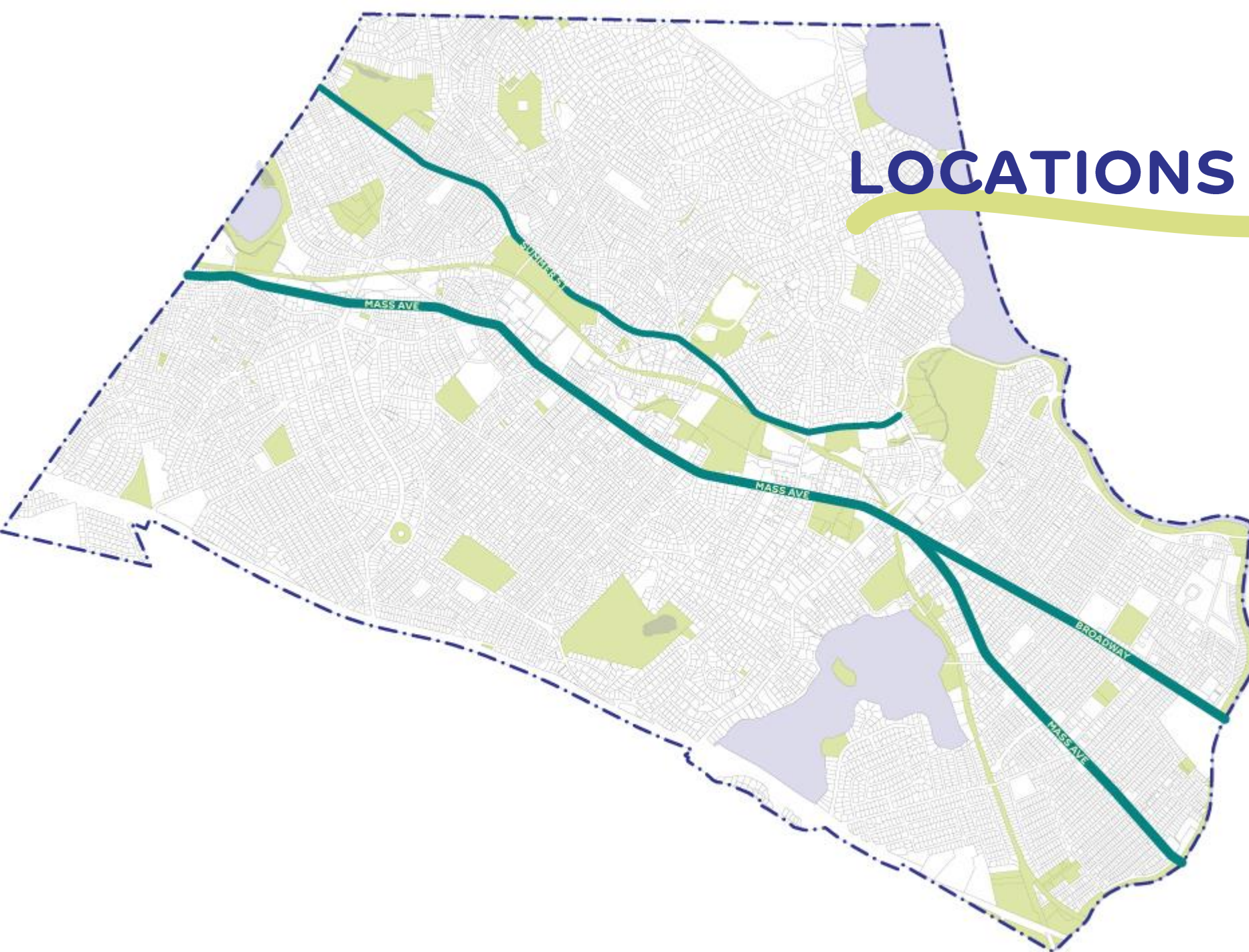
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**Proximity to shared
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LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY



Multi-family housing on commercial corridors

Multifamily housing in
commercial centers

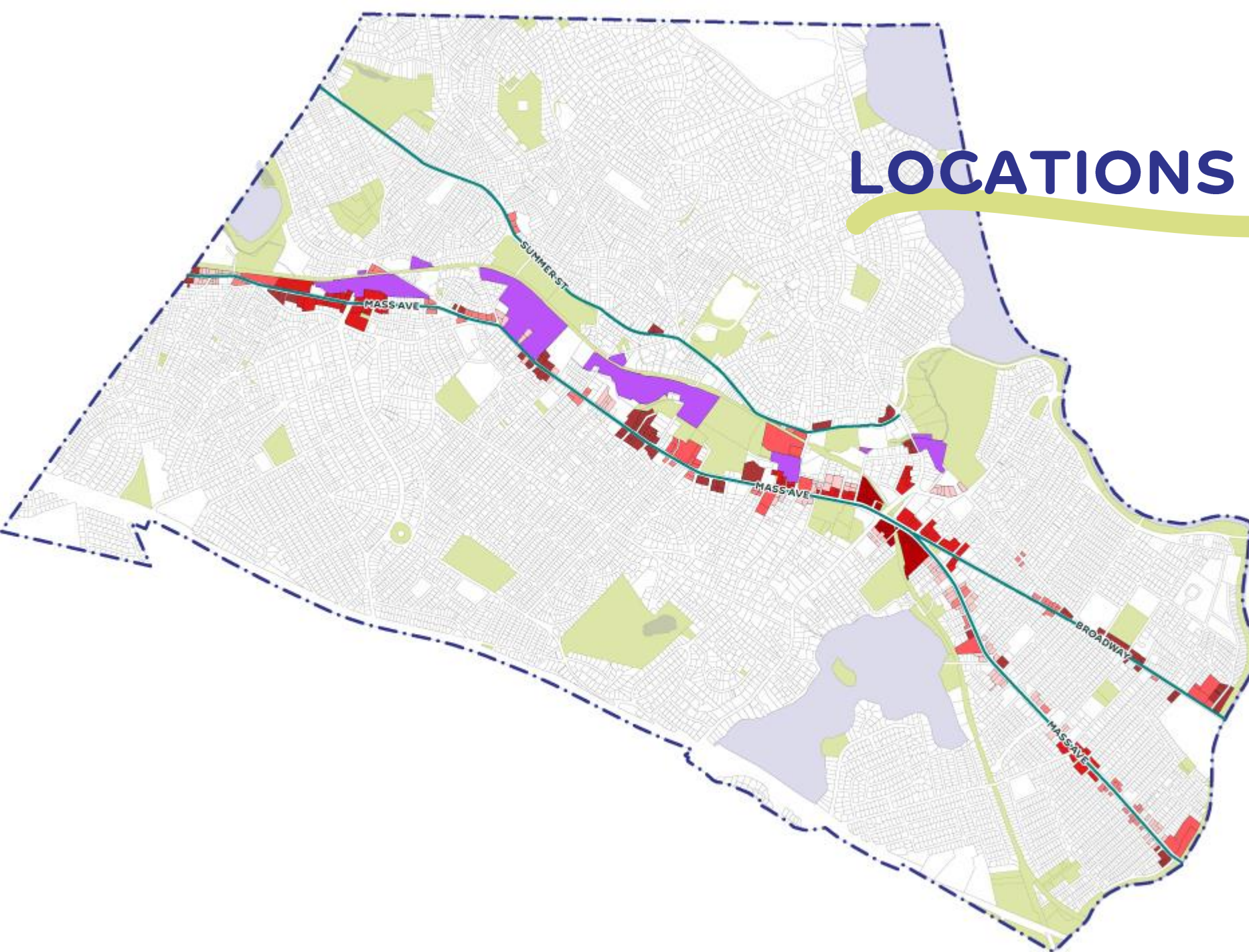
Multifamily housing
near commercial
corridors

Avoiding flood prone
areas

On large parcels

In all neighborhoods
of Arlington

LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY



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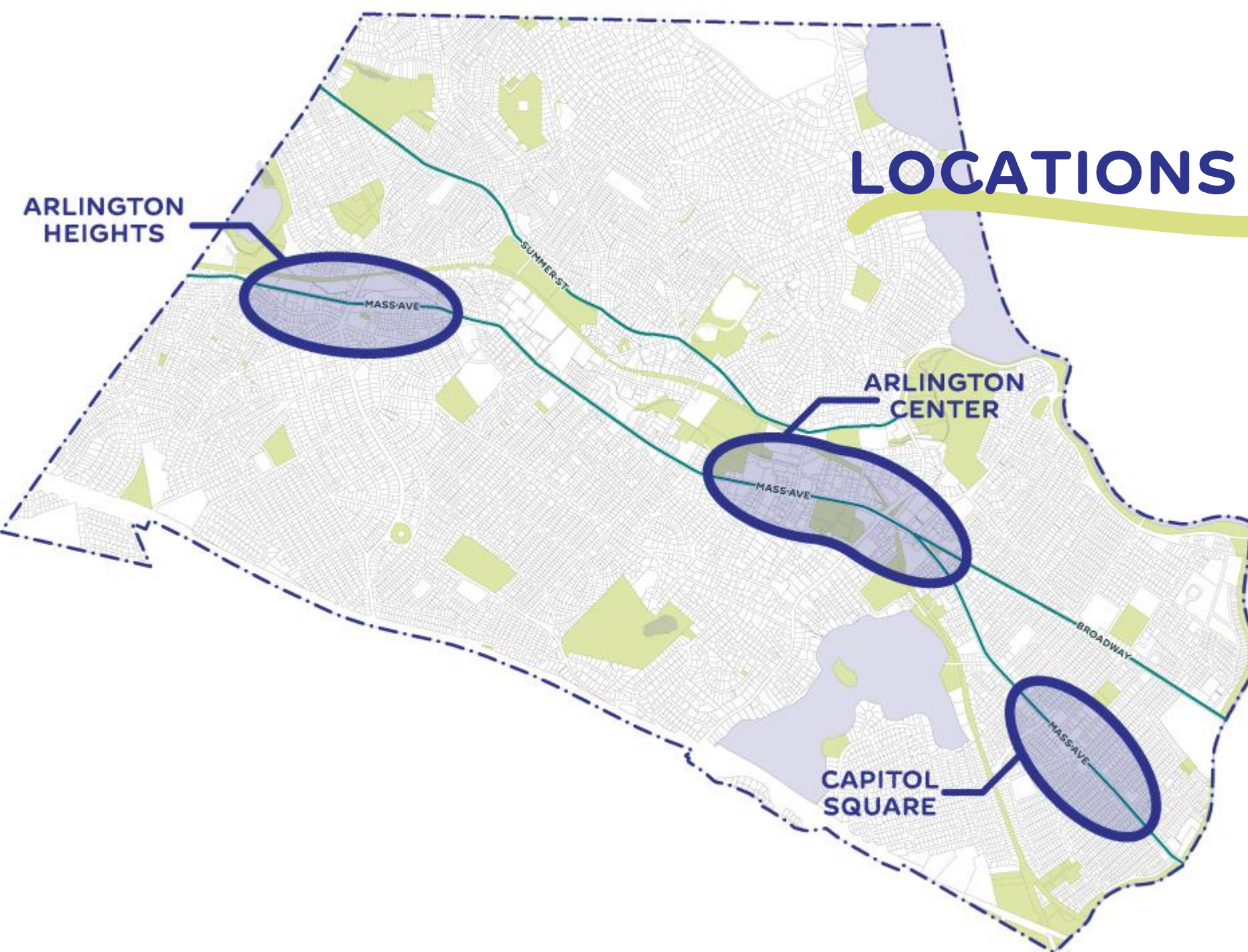
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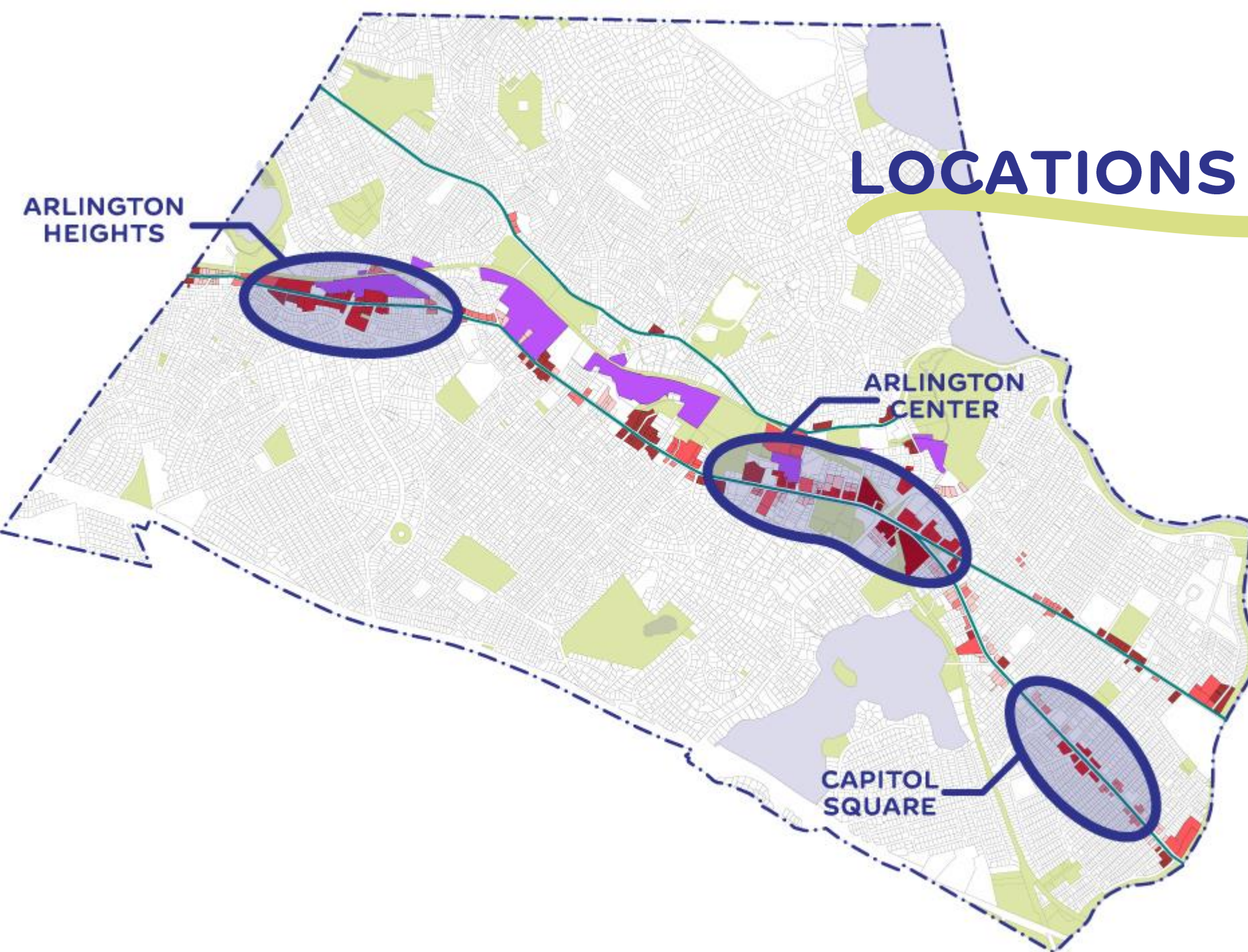
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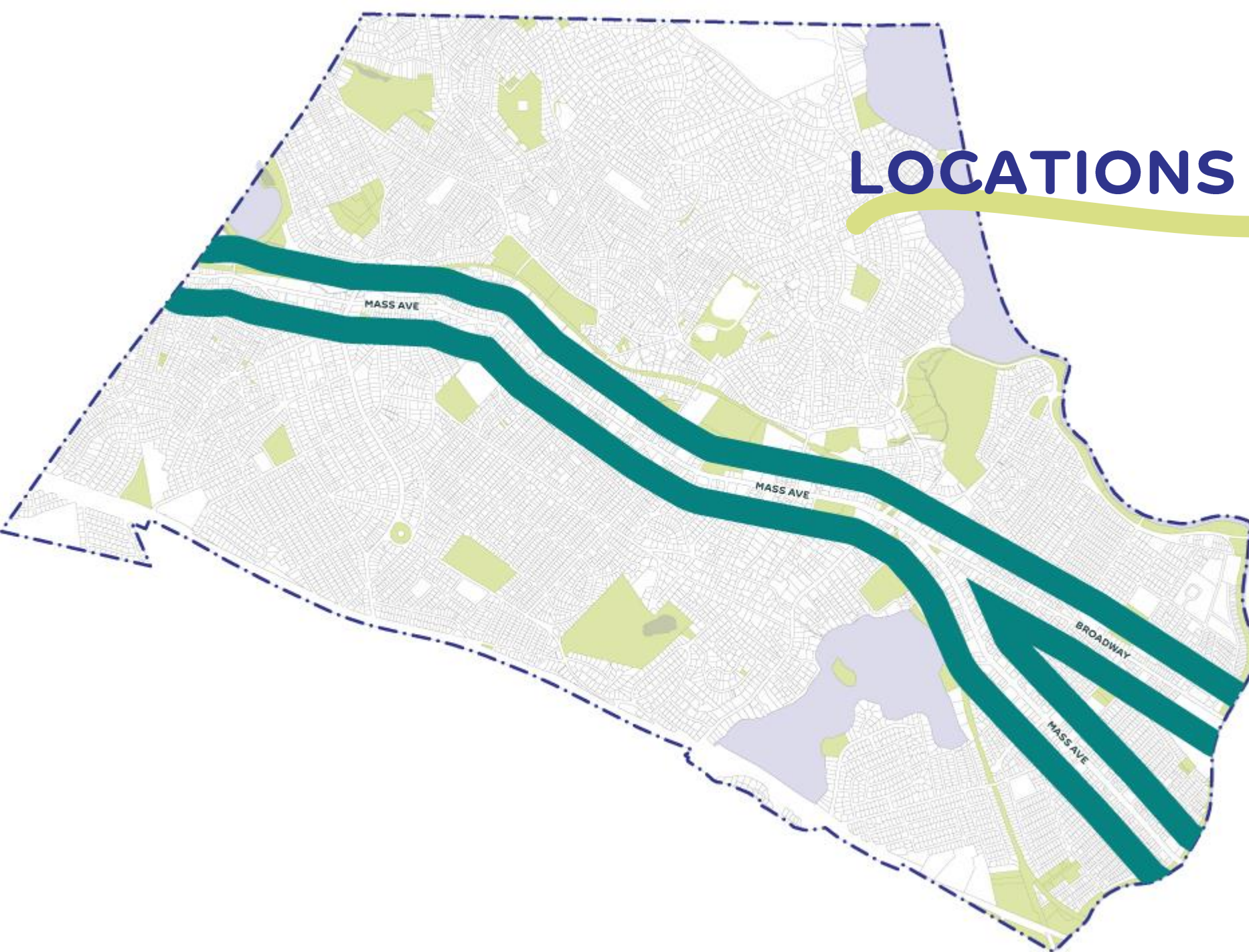
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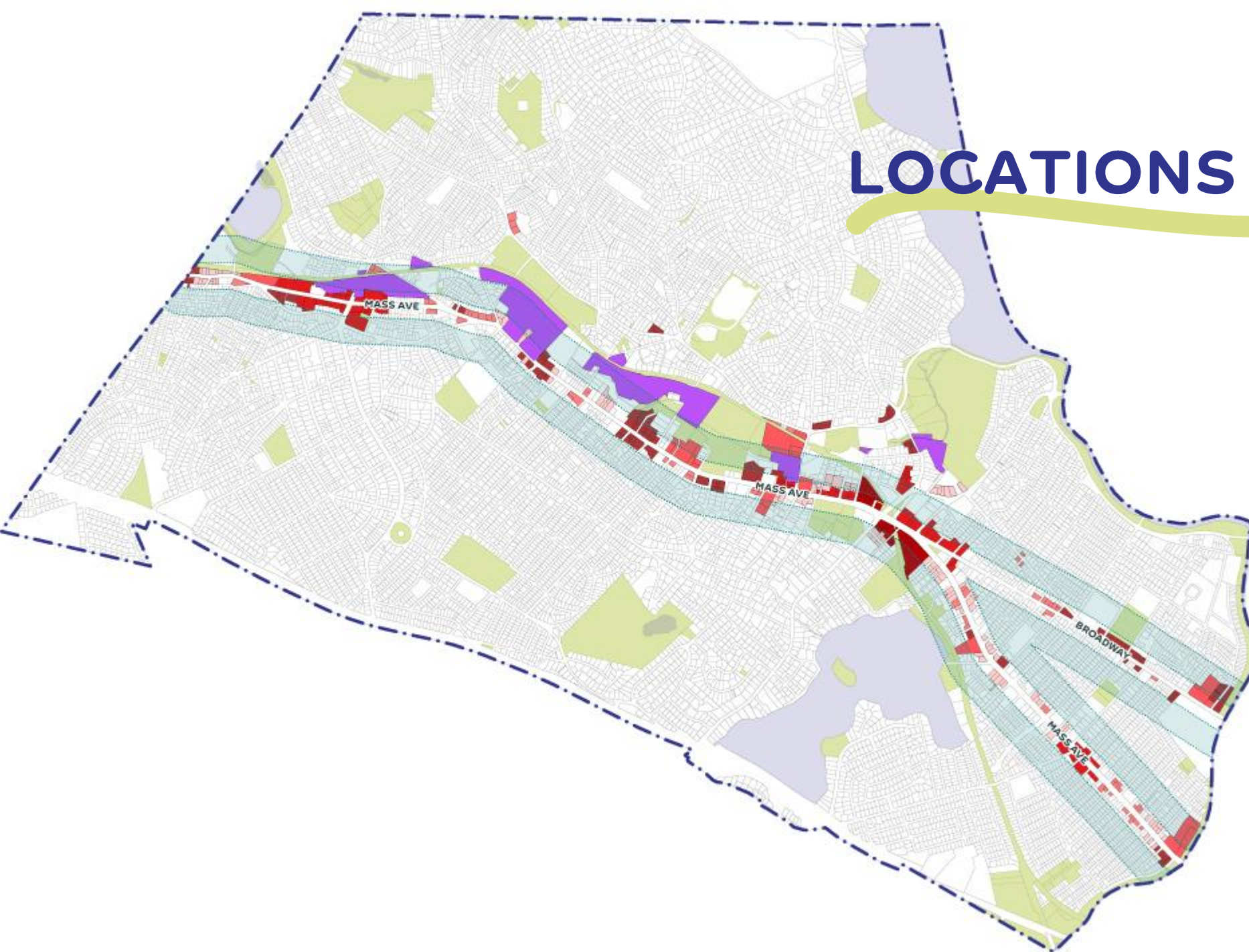
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LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY



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**Multifamily housing
near commercial
corridors**

Avoiding flood prone
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On large parcels

In all neighborhoods
of Arlington

A map of Arlington, Virginia, showing the locations and proximity for multi-family housing. The map features a grid of streets and various colored overlays. Dark green areas represent flood-prone regions, while light green areas represent other designated zones. A dashed blue line outlines the city's boundary. The title 'LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY' is prominently displayed in the upper right corner, underlined in a light green color.

LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY

Multi-family housing
on commercial
corridors

Multifamily housing in
commercial centers

Multifamily housing
near commercial
corridors

**Avoiding flood prone
areas**

On large parcels

In all neighborhoods
of Arlington

A map of Arlington, Virginia, showing the distribution of multi-family housing. The map is color-coded: red indicates multi-family housing on commercial corridors, green indicates multi-family housing in commercial centers, and light blue indicates multi-family housing near commercial corridors. The map also shows flood-prone areas in light purple. The title 'LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY' is written in large, bold, blue letters with a green underline.

LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY

Multi-family housing
on commercial
corridors

Multifamily housing in
commercial centers

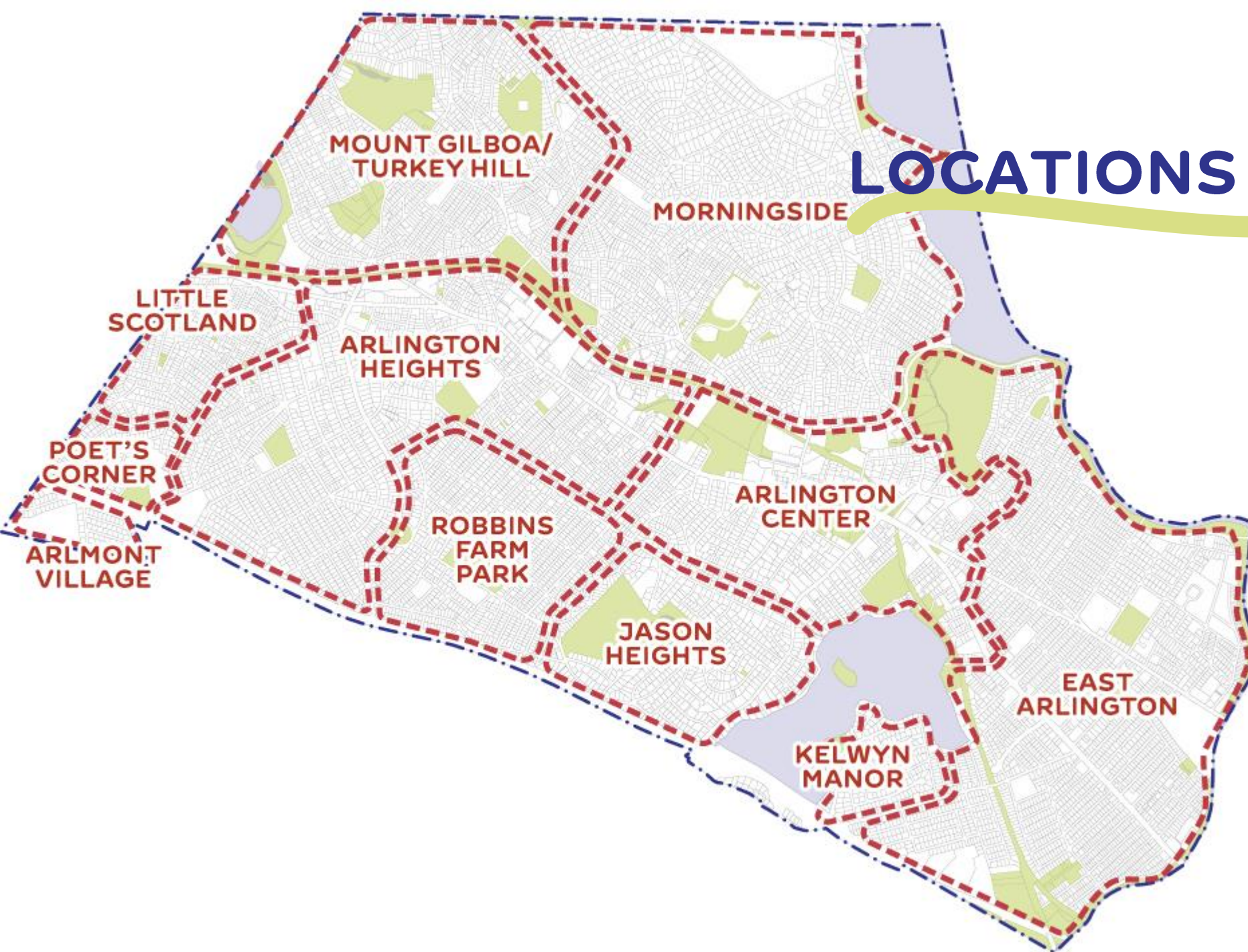
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LOCATIONS + PROXIMITY



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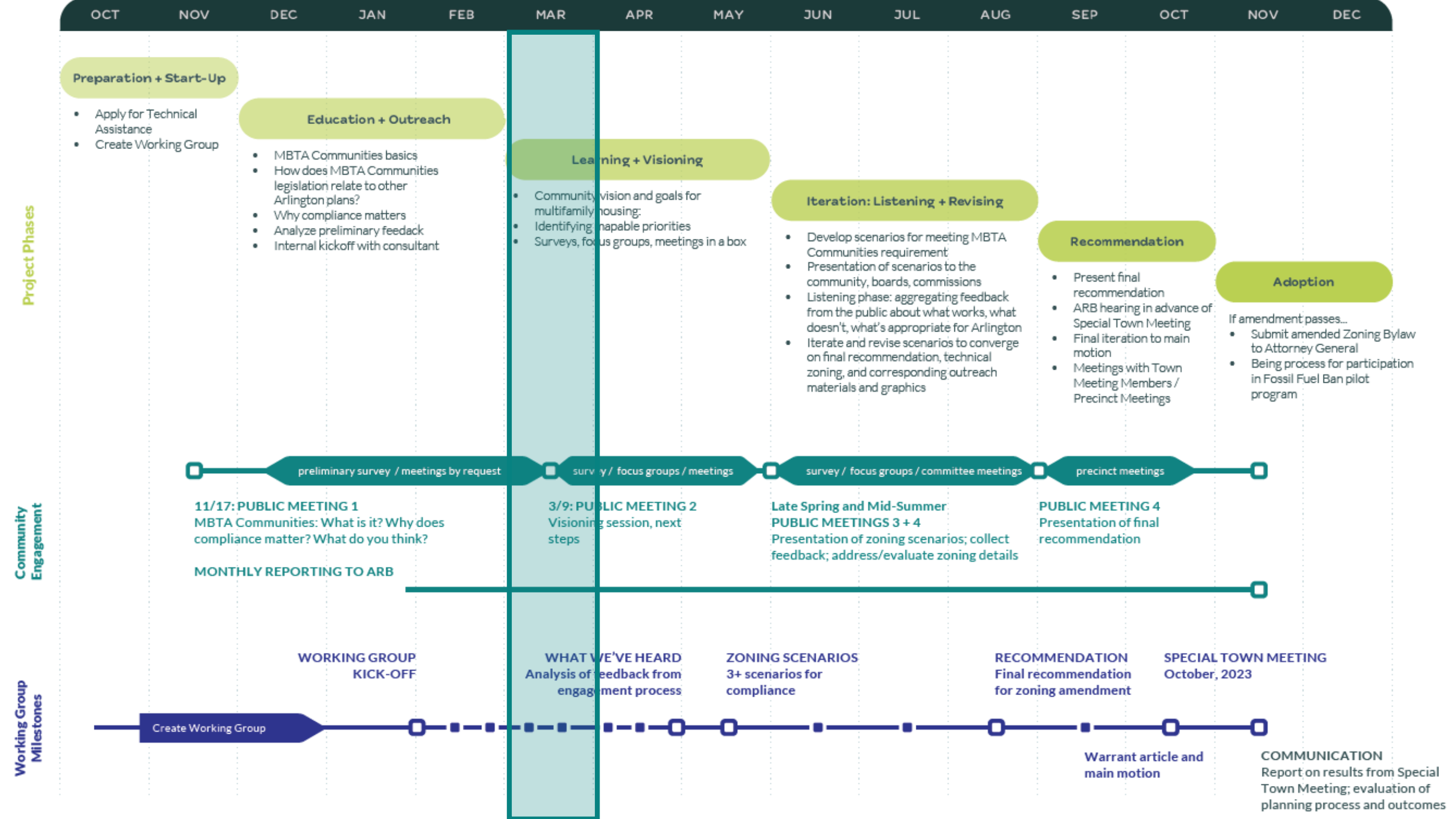
On large parcels

**In all neighborhoods
of Arlington**



TIMELINE

Where we're at, where we're going, how and when we'll get there



IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

Visioning!

- Collect info from tonight
- Administer communitywide survey
- Release visioning kits
- Focus groups/ interviews
- Create FAQ based on tonight's feedback and other questions

Scenarios

- Analyze feedback, map into scenarios for public comment
- Next public meeting – late May or early June

Stay in the loop!

- We'll use the email registration list to keep you up to date



LET'S TALK

Please share your questions
and comments

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